KID COLT OUTLAW

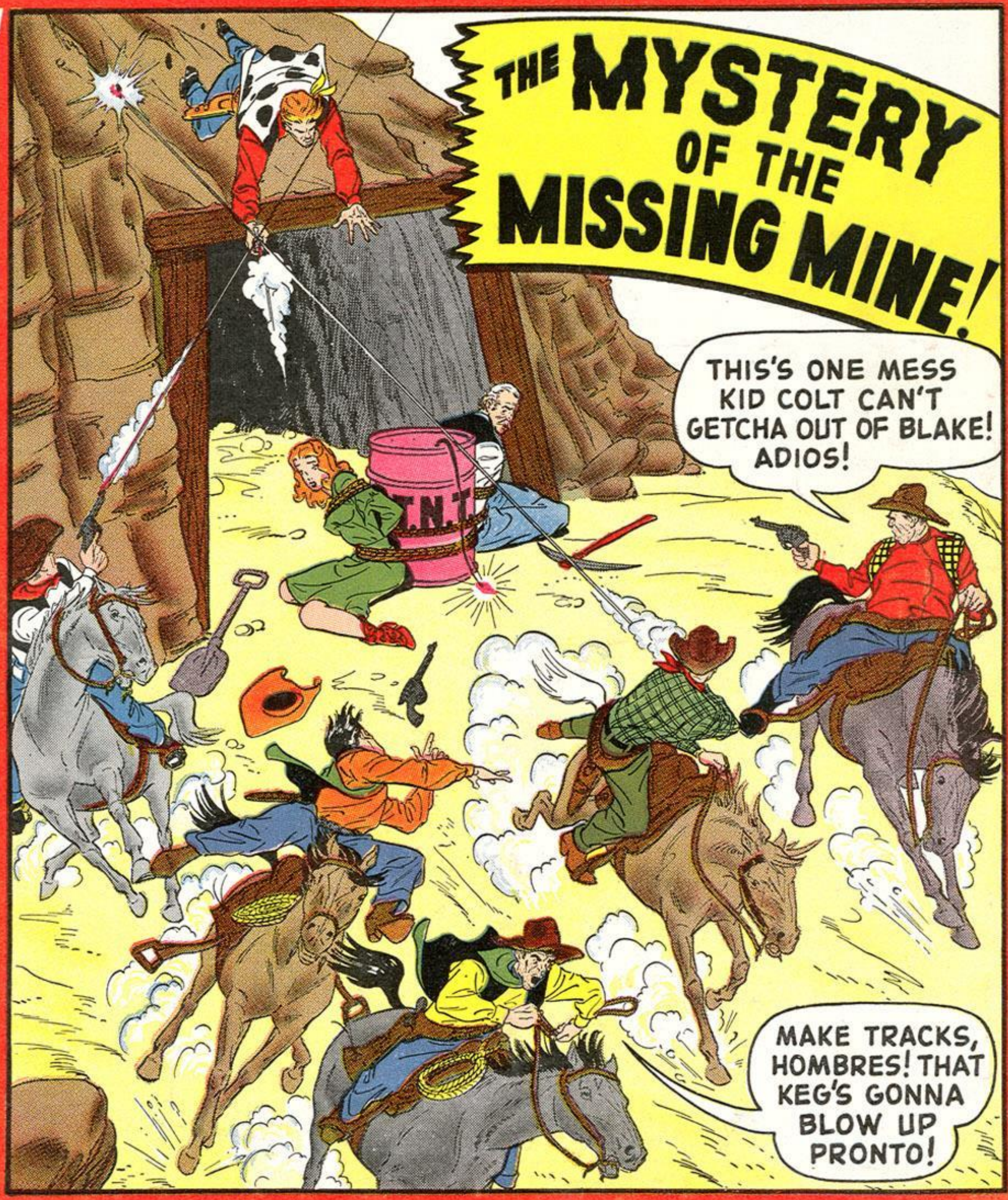
MAY
NO. 5

MARVEL COMIC

10¢

WESTERN ACTION

THE MYSTERY OF THE MISSING MINE!



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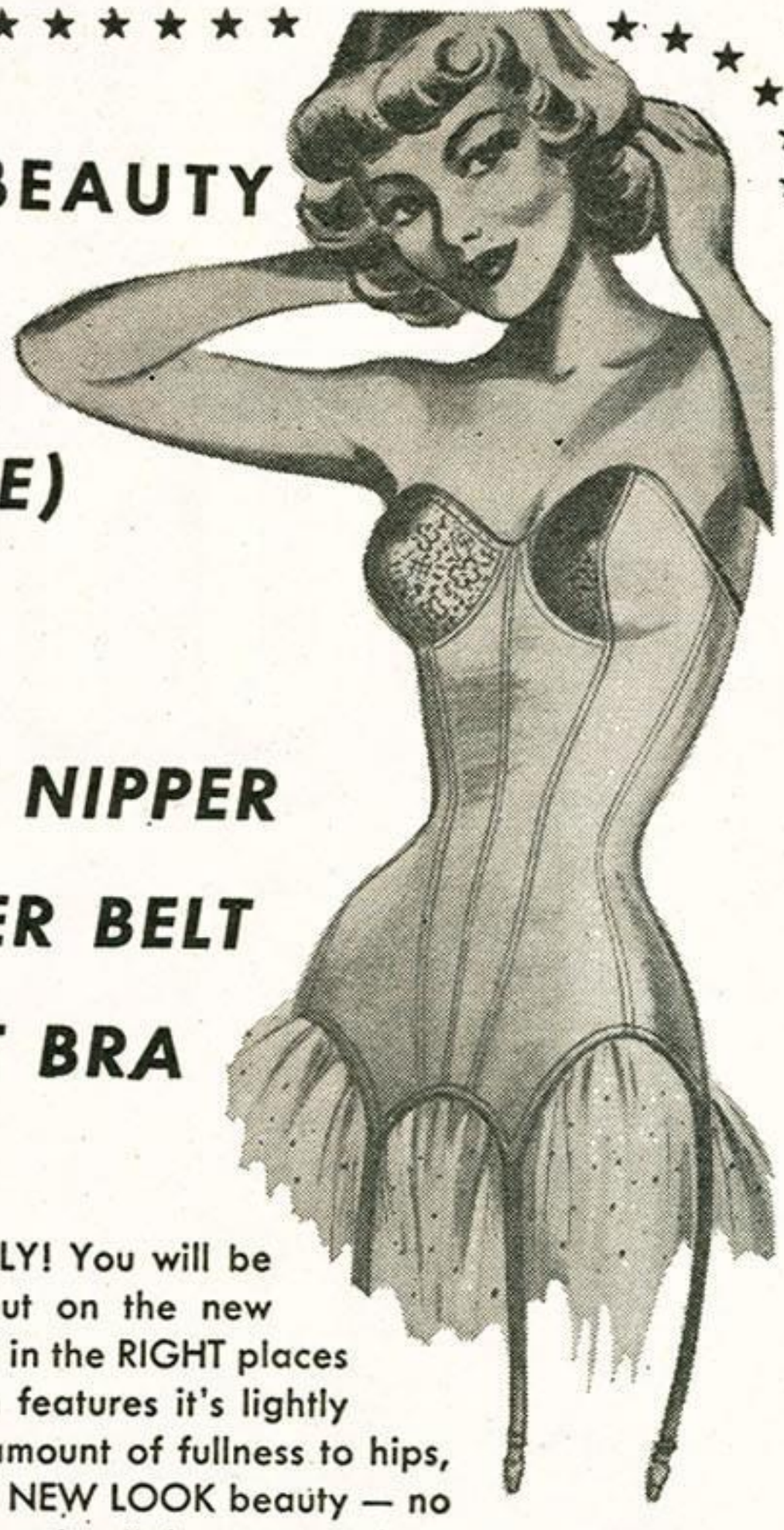

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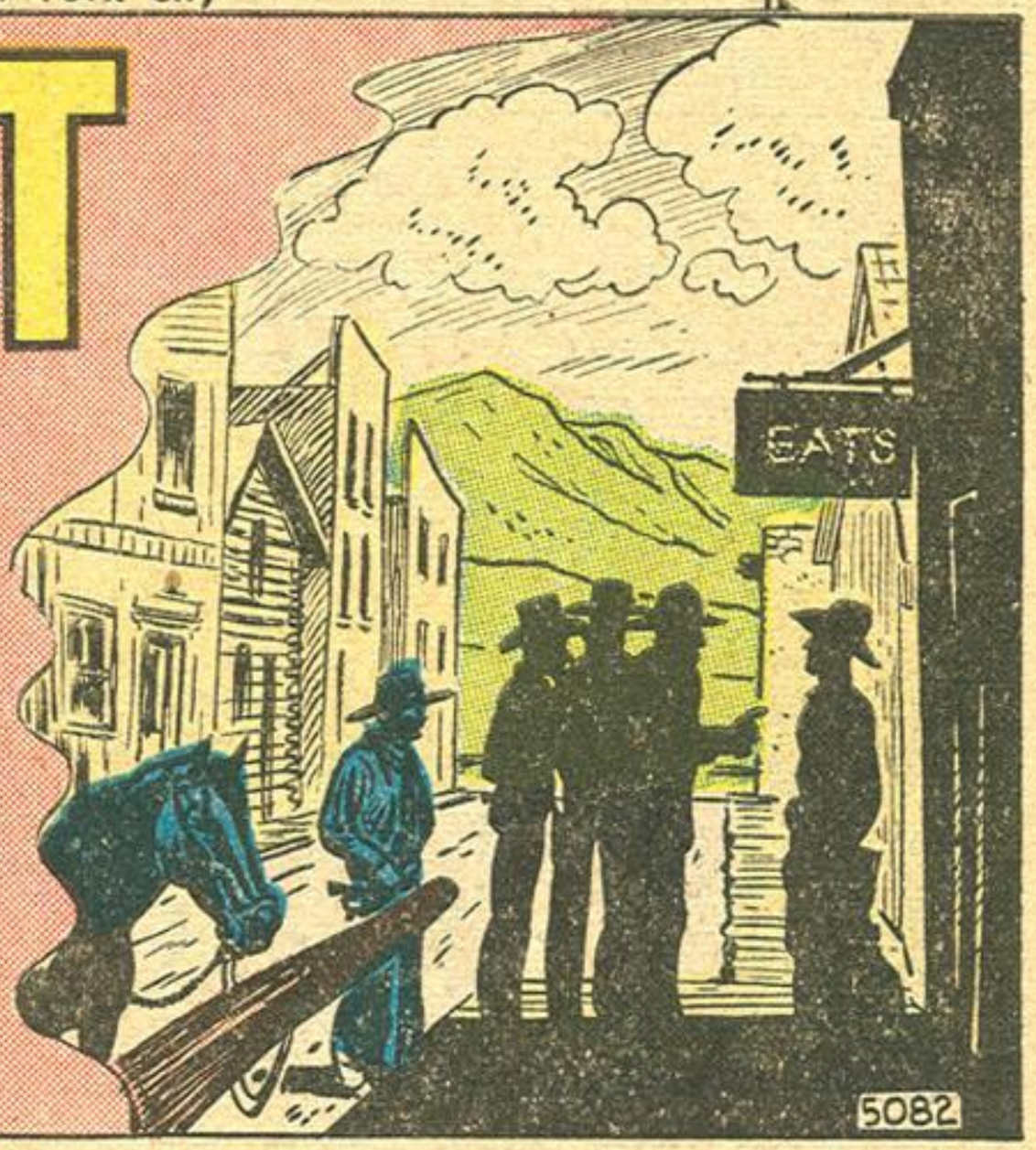
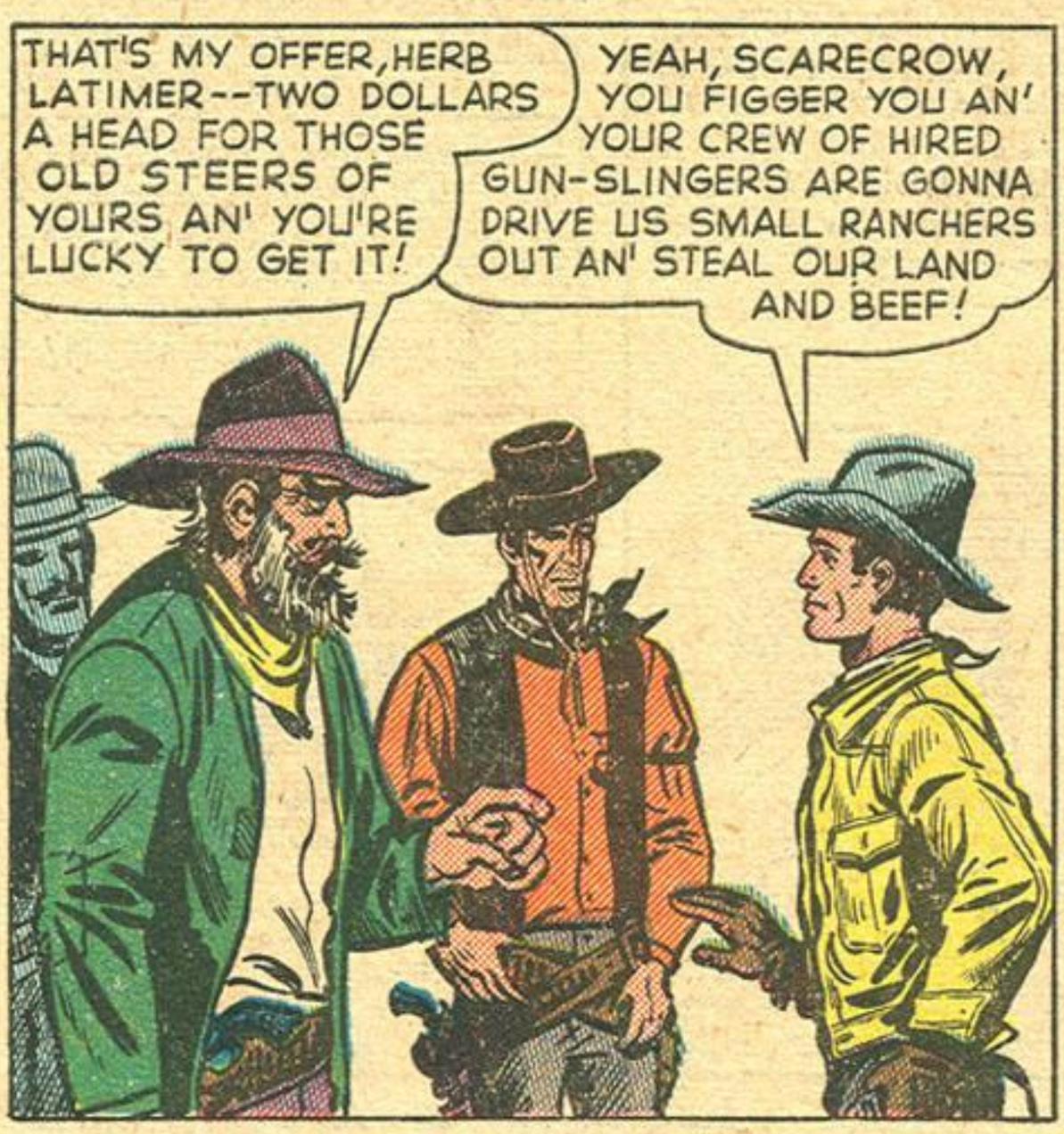
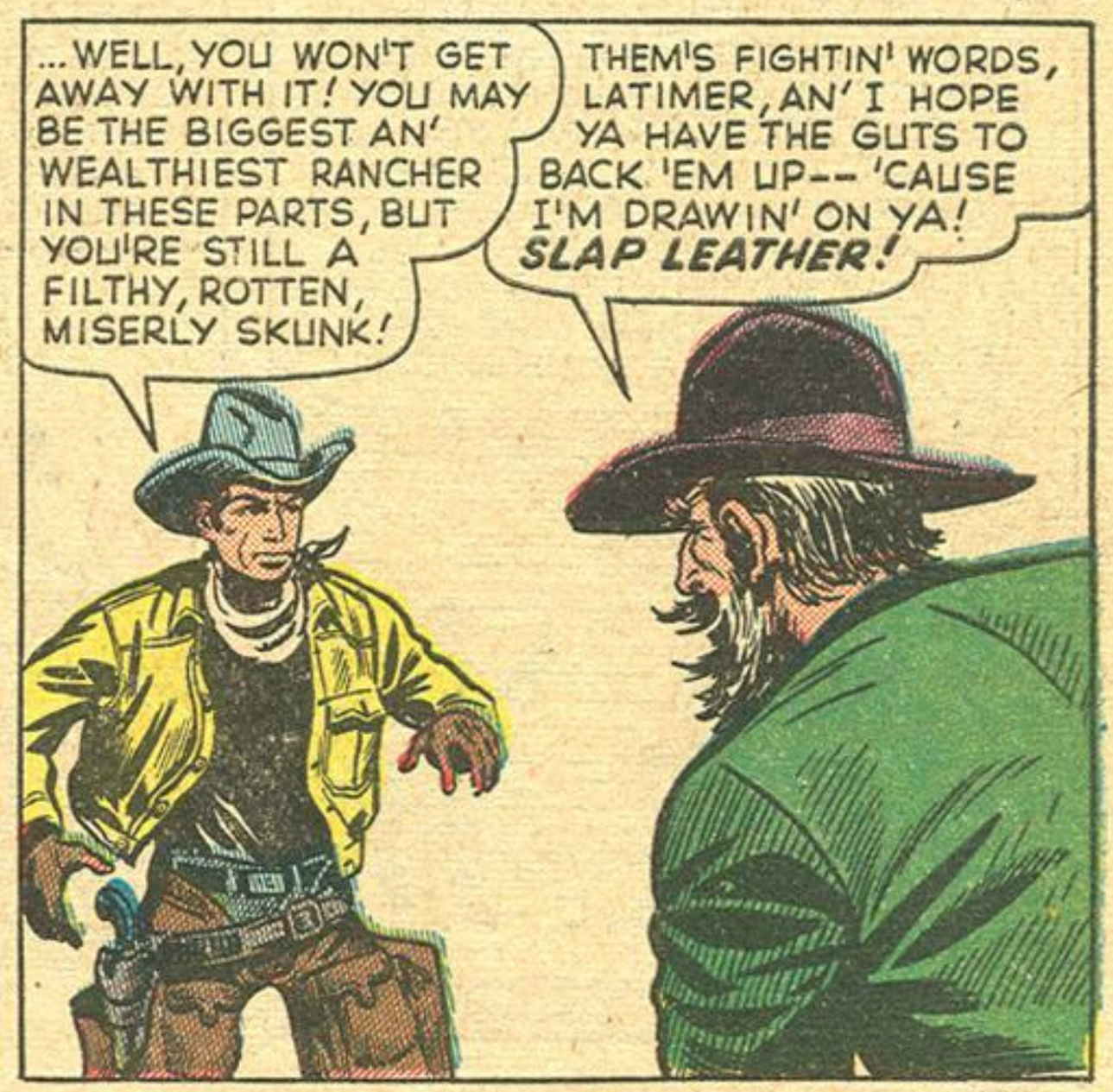
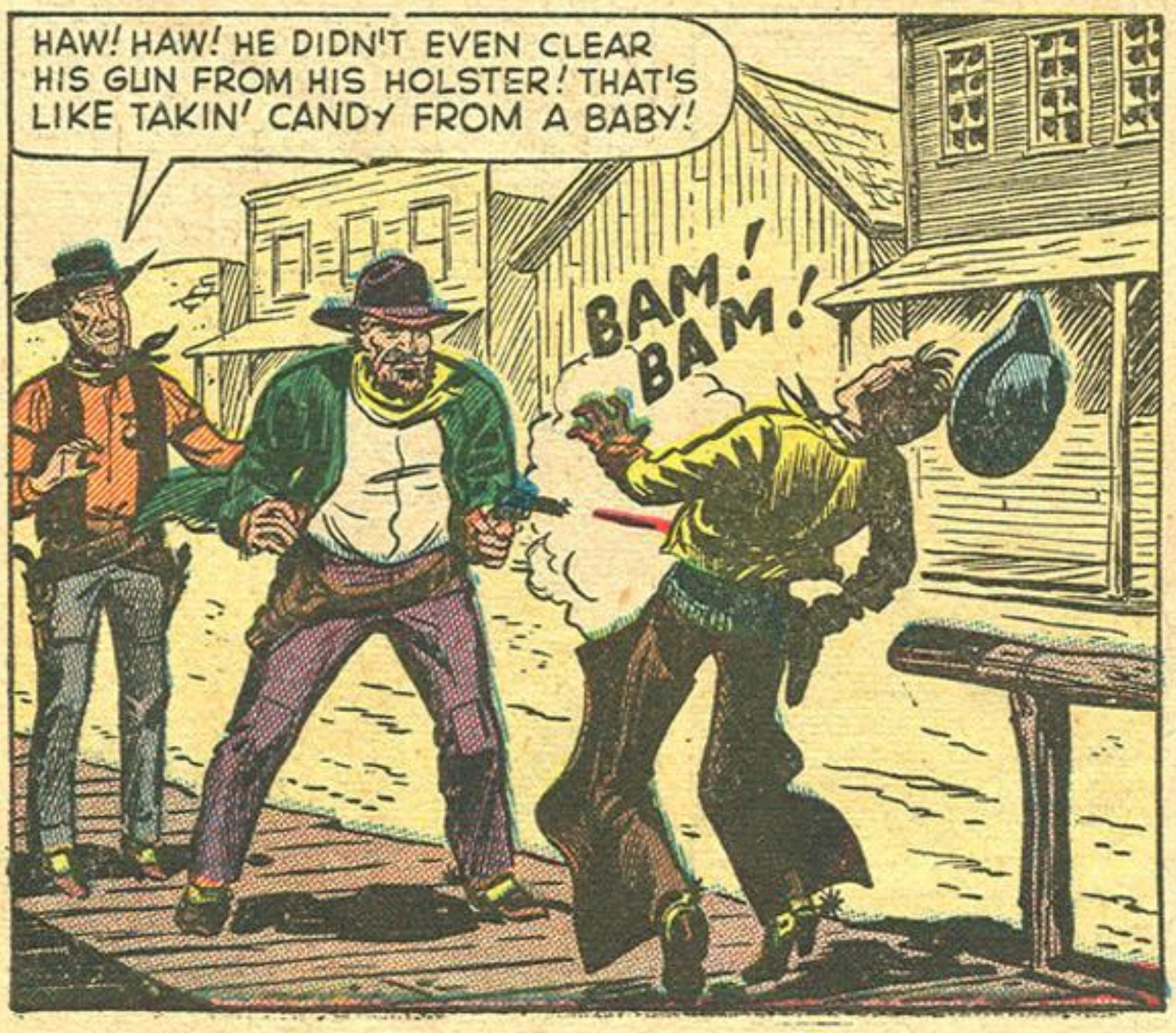
KID COLT

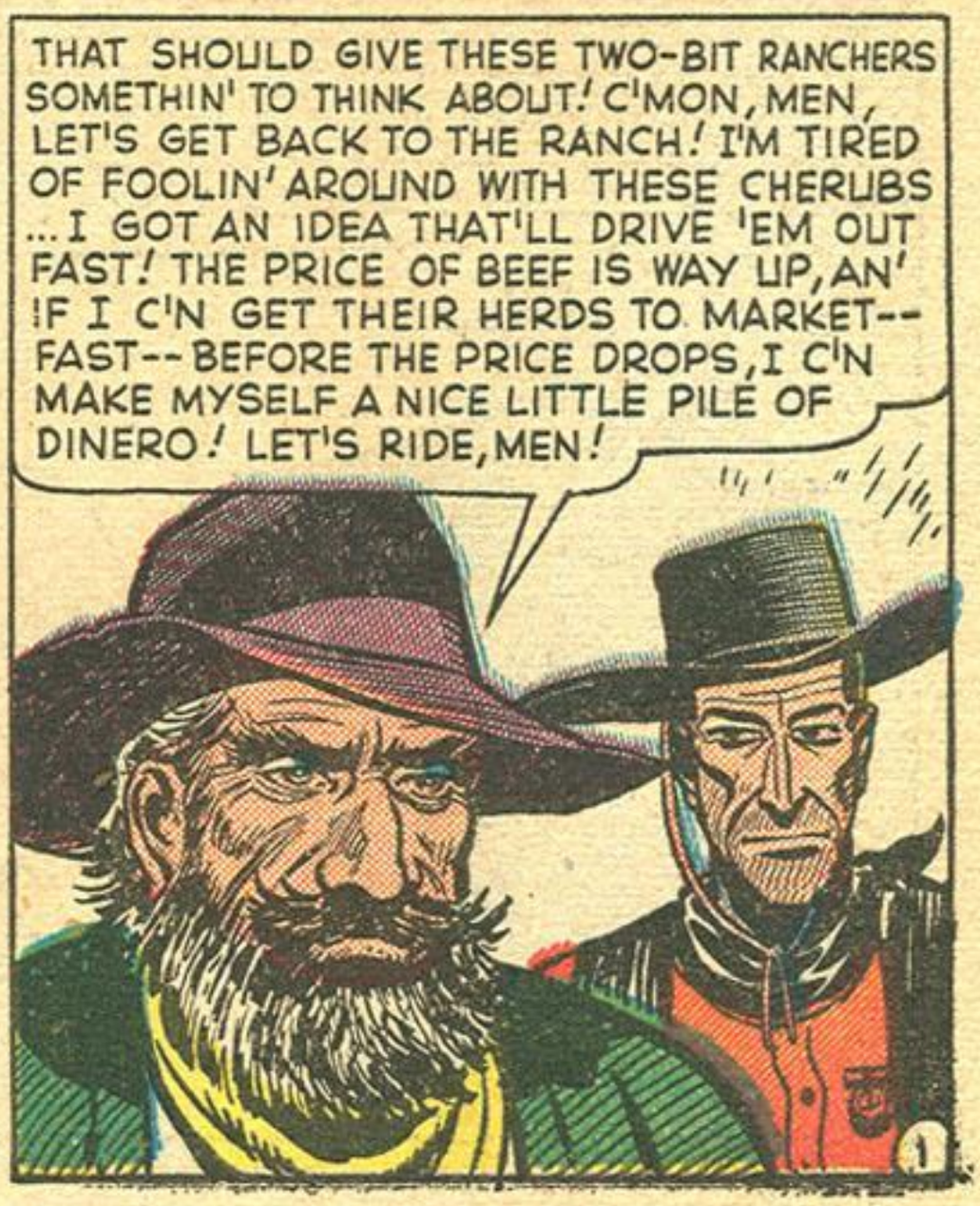
"THE SIGN OF THE SCARECROW!"




THAT'S MY OFFER, HERB LATIMER--TWO DOLLARS A HEAD FOR THOSE OLD STEERS OF YOURS AN' YOU'RE LUCKY TO GET IT!
YEAH, SCARECROW, YOU FIGGER YOU AN' YOUR CREW OF HIRED GUN-SLINGERS ARE GONNA DRIVE US SMALL RANCHERS OUT AN' STEAL OUR LAND AND BEEF!


...WELL, YOU WON'T GET AWAY WITH IT! YOU MAY BE THE BIGGEST AN' WEALTHIEST RANCHER IN THESE PARTS, BUT YOU'RE STILL A FILTHY, ROTTEN, MISERLY SKUNK!
THEM'S FIGHTIN' WORDS, LATIMER, AN' I HOPE YA HAVE THE GUTS TO BACK 'EM UP-- 'CAUSE I'M DRAWIN' ON YA! SLAP LEATHER!




THAT SHOULD GIVE THESE TWO-BIT RANCHERS SOMETHIN' TO THINK ABOUT! C'MON, MEN, LET'S GET BACK TO THE RANCH! I'M TIRED OF FOOLIN' AROUND WITH THESE CHERUBS ...I GOT AN IDEA THAT'LL DRIVE 'EM OUT FAST! THE PRICE OF BEEF IS WAY UP, AN' IF I C'N GET THEIR HERDS TO MARKET-- FAST-- BEFORE THE PRICE DROPS, I C'N MAKE MYSELF A NICE LITTLE PILE OF DINERO! LET'S RIDE, MEN!
1

AS THE GUN-HUNG HARDCASES SLAM OUT OF TOWN, THE TIMID TOWNSFOLK OF SOUTH FORKS EMERGE FROM STORE AND ALLEY TO GATHER AROUND THE BODY OF THE FALLEN RANCHER!

POOR KID, HE DIDN'T STAND A CHANCE AGAINST THAT LIGHTNIN' DRAW OF THE SCARECROW'S. SAME AS MURDER!

SHUT YOUR MOUTH, SAM! WE DON'T WANNA GIT MIXED UP IN THIS FRACAS!

WHAT'S GOIN' ON? I HEARD GUNFIRE!

IT'S ERNIE CANTREL!

THE SCARECROW JUST GUNNED HERB LATIMER DOWN! SOMEBODY'S GOTTA BRING THE TIDIN'S TO HIS SISTER, BETTY, AN' I RECKON YORE THE PROPER PARTY FOR THET CHORE, ERNIE!

SOME OF YOU BIG BRAVE MEN CARRY POOR HERB OVER TO THE UNDERTAKER'S --I'LL RIDE OUT AN' TELL BETTY!

SEE HERE NOW, ERNIE, THERE AIN'T NO CALL FER YOU TO MAKE NASTY REMARKS 'GAINST US TOWN FOLKS! WE AIN'T MIXIN' IN THIS HERE FEUD, 'CAUSE WHOEVER WINS HAS GOTTA BUY FROM US IN TOWN!

YOU MEALY-MOUTHED SKUNKS, ALL OF YOU! STANDIN' BY DOIN' NOTHIN' WHILE A BOY IS SHOT DOWN IN COLD BLOOD! THE SCARECROW'S GOT YOU ALL SCARED TO DEATH!

THE ANGRY RANCHER RIDES OUT OF TOWN TOWARD THE LATIMER RANCH!

WE SMALL RANCHERS'VE GOT TO ORGANIZE--DO SOMETHING BEFORE THE SCARECROW GUNS US DOWN ONE BY ONE LIKE HE GUNNED POOR HERB!

MEANWHILE AT THE MOUTH OF THE SOUTH FORKS RIVER...

LAY THE DYNAMITE UNDER THAT BUTTE THERE, SQUINT!

HEY, I GET IT! YOU AIM TO BLOW THE BUTTE INTO THE STREAM, SO THE WATER'LL FLOW AWAY FROM THE SMALL RANCHES AN' THEIR CATTLE'LL DIE OF THIRST!

HAW! HAW! YOU'RE A SMART BOY, SQUINT! THE WATER'LL BACK UP ONTO OUR LAND, AN' WE'LL HAVE PLENTY BUT THEY'LL HAVE NONE! THEY'LL COME CRAWLIN' TO ME TO BUY THEIR ROTTEN BEEF! I'LL TEACH 'EM TO BUCK THE SCARECROW!

AT THE LATIMER RANCH, ERNIE CANTREL HAS RELUCTANTLY BROUGHT THE SAD NEWS TO THE DEAD MAN'S SISTER!

OH, ERNIE, WILL IT NEVER STOP? FIRST DAD BUSH-WHACKED! NOW H-HERB SHOT DOWN... AN' THE SCARECROW GROWS MORE POWERFUL EACH DAY!

PLEASE, BETTY, DON'T CRY! I'LL HELP YOU ALL I CAN! AN' SO WILL THE OTHER RANCHERS!

WHAT'S *THAT?*

RED BUTTE! SOMEBODY BLEW IT UP!

BUT-- BUT WHY?

THERE'S YOUR ANSWER! LOOK AT THE STREAM! THAT LOWDOWN POLECAT THE SCARECROW, HAS BLASTED THE BUTTE INTO THE RIVER TO DIVERT ITS FLOW AWAY FROM US!

THAT'S THE LAST STRAW! WE CAN'T LIVE WITHOUT WATER! BETTY, I'M OFF TO ROUND UP THE SMALL RANCHERS-- WE'LL MEET IN TOWN TONIGHT AT MacCLULLEN'S HARD-WARE STORE --EIGHT O'CLOCK --I'LL SEE YOU THEN!

THAT NIGHT AT MacCLULLEN'S HARDWARE STORE!

...AN' I TELL YOU OUR ONLY CHANCE IS TO FIGHT!

I AGREE WITH ERNIE!

I KNOW YOU AIN'T GOT A DROP OF WATER, MISS BETTY, BUT THE REST OF US RANCHERS HAVE GOT A LITTLE THAT'S FORMED AT THE SINKS! ENOUGH FER A WEEK ABOUT...

ANYHOW, HOW'RE WE GONNA FIGHT THE SCARECROW AN' HIS GANG OF KILLERS? WE AIN'T GUNMEN, WE'RE RANCHERS... WE WOULDN'T STAND A CHANCE!

YOU SHORE SPOKE A MOUTHFUL WHEN YOU SAID THAT, POP!

IT'S THE SCARECROW'S TOP GUNHANDS!

WHO INVITED YOU HERE?

WHY, WE INVITED OURSELVES--TO BRING YOU A MESSAGE FROM THE SCARECROW! HE OFFERS YOU ONE DOLLAR A HEAD FOR YOUR STOCK, TAKE IT OR LEAVE IT!

THAT'S OUTRIGHT ROBBERY!

MEANWHILE, A SOLITARY FIGURE RIDES WARILY INTO TOWN ON A POWERFUL STEEL-DUST STALLION! AN ERRANT BEAM OF LIGHT STRAYS FOR A MOMENT OVER THE STRONG FACE AND WE RECOGNIZE KID COLT, LONE WOLF RIDER OF THE OWL-HOOT TRAILS!

THERE'S A LIGHT IN THE HARDWARE STORE, STEEL, OL' FELLER! I'VE GOT TO GET SOME SHELLS!

HARDWARE

I'LL BE OUT IN A JIFFY, FELLER!

HARDWARE - MacCLULLEN'S - SU

WE CAN'T SELL AT THAT PRICE! WE WON'T TAKE IT!

YOU'LL TAKE IT AN' LIKE IT! ALL OF YA!

HEY, HOLD ON THERE!

STRANGER, YA' BETTER NOT BUY CHIPS IN THIS GAME! THIS AIN'T NONE OF YORE BUSINESS!

ANYTIME I FIND A BUNCH OF WOULD-BE HARDCASES INTIMIDATING HONEST PEOPLE, I MAKE IT MY BUSINESS!

I WARNED YA-- MOVE ON OR WE'LL BURN YA DOWN!

I DON'T EXACTLY FEEL LIKE MOVIN' ON! AS TO BURNIN' ME DOWN... WELL, YOU C'N TRY!

GUN THE JASPER TA DOLL RAGS, MEN--!

WE'LL BLAST HIM...(ULP!)

OWWW! BLAST YOU, THE SCARECROW WILL HAVE YOUR HIDE FOR THIS!

I TAKE IT THIS SCARECROW HOMBRE IS YOUR BOSS? WELL, TELL HIM THE NEXT TIME HE SHOULDN'T SEND BOYS TO DO MEN'S WORK! *NOW GIT!*

THAT WAS A WONDERFUL THING YOU DID, STRANGER! BUT I'M AFRAID OF THE CONSEQUENCES!

CONSEQUENCES BE HANGED! YOU SAID WE COULDN'T FIGHT THE SCARECROW BECAUSE OF HIS GUN-MEN...WELL HERE'S A MAN WHO'S FASTER AN' DEADLIER THAN ANY OF THEM!

THE SITUATION IS EXPLAINED TO KID COLT BY THE EXCITED RANCHERS!

IF HE'LL LEAD US, BY GRAG I'LL FOLLER!

ERNIE'S RIGHT, MEN!

NO 17-YEAR-OLD GAL'S GONNA OUT-GAME *ME!*

WAIT A MINUTE, FOLKS! SUPPOSE YOU TELL ME WHAT THIS IS ALL ABOUT!

ME TOO!

ME TOO!

AN' HE PLANS TO DRIVE US OUT AN' HOG THE WHOLE RANGE!

BUENO! I GET THE PICTURE AN' I'LL LEAD YOU! LET'S GO TAKE A LOOK AT THE DAM THEY BLASTED INTO THE WATER AN' CALCULATE HOW IT C'N BE REMOVED!

YOU RIDE BACK TO THE RANCH, BETTY! WE MIGHT MEET UP WITH THE SCARECROW AN' I DON'T WANT YOU NEAR ANY SHOOTING!

LET'S GO, MEN!

A QUICK HARD RIDE AND THE LITTLE CAVALCADE APPROACHES THE SITE OF THE DYNAMITING.., THEN SUDDENLY A VICIOUS VOLLEY OF RIFLE FIRE STRIKES OUT AT THEM!

BACK, MEN! THEY'RE ENTRENCHED BEHIND THE DAM!

THEY GOT OLD MAN CARRISTER-- BLAST THEIR MANGY HIDES!

A DOWNHEARTED GROUP OF WEARY MEN MAKE THEIR WAY BACK TO TOWN!

LISTEN, THIS IS ONLY THE FIRST ROUND! I'VE GOT AN IDEA! ERNIE, HOW DO I GET TO BETTY LATIMER'S SPREAD?

TAKE THIS LEFT HAND FORK! IT'S ABOUT A MILE OUT!

ERNIE, YOU AN' THE MEN GET AS MANY GUNS AN' AMMUNITION AS YOU C'N LAY HANDS TO! IN THE MORNING, GO OUT WHERE THE SCARECROW AN' HIS GUNNIES 'RE HOLED UP! KEEP OUT OF RIFLE RANGE AN' DON'T DO ANYTHING TILL YOU HEAR FROM ME! ADIOS!

I HOPE YOU KNOW WHAT YOU'RE DOIN'!

THE SWINGING STRIDE OF THE POWERFUL ROAN STALLION EATS UP THE SHORT DISTANCE TO THE LATIMER RANCH!

WHO IS IT? SING OUT OR I'LL START THROWING LEAD!

HOLD YOUR FIRE, MISS BETTY! IT'S ME, KID COLT!

MISS BETTY, YOUR CATTLE CAN'T GO ANOTHER DAY WITHOUT WATER! I SUGGEST YOU SELL 'EM TO THE SCARECROW... HE'LL DRIVE 'EM TO STORYVILLE TO BE SHIPPED, AN WATER 'EM ON THE WAY! MEANWHILE, HE'LL HAVE TO TAKE MEN AWAY FROM THE DAM TO DRIVE YOUR HERD!

BUT HE ONLY OFFERED ME A DOLLAR A HEAD! IT WOULD RUIN ME TO SELL AT THAT PRICE!

TRUST ME! I GUARANTEE YOU A TOP PRICE FOR YOUR BEEF! LET'S GO IN THE HOUSE AN' MAKE OUT A BILL OF SALE, THEN I'LL RIDE UP AN' TALK WITH THE SCARECROW!

AN HOUR LATER AT THE RIVER FORTIFICATIONS!

SCARECROW, I'M COMIN' IN UNDER A WHITE FLAG FOR A POW-WOW!

COME AHEAD! THIS BETTER BE ON THE LEVEL OR WE'LL SHOOT YA TO DOLL RAGS!

SCARECROW, BETTY LATIMER HAS DECIDED TO SELL OUT AT YOUR PRICE, IF YOU'LL DRIVE THE CATTLE TO MARKET IMMEDIATELY!

SOUNDS LIKE A TRAP, BOSS! YOU'LL HAFTA TAKE HALF THE MEN AWAY FROM HERE TO DRIVE THAT HERD!

SHADDUP, SQUINT! HALF OF US IS MORE THAN ENOUGH TO HOLD OFF THOSE YELLER-BELLIED RANCHERS! HMMM... IF I DRIVE THAT HERD TO MARKET NOW I OUGHT TO MAKE ABOUT 15,000 PROFIT! I'LL DO IT! TELL MISS BETTY TO WRITE UP THE BILL OF SALE -- I'LL BE THERE WITH MY MEN IN AN HOUR!

KID COLT SMILES QUIETLY IN THE DARK! BANKING ON THE SCARECROW'S PROVERBIAL GREED HAS WON HIM THE FIRST ROUND IN HIS BATTLE AGAINST LONG ODDS!

THE NEXT MORNING KID COLT RIDES OUT TO HIS MEN AT THE RIVER FACING THE FORTIFICATION!

HERE HE COMES NOW!

PLEASE, ERNIE! DON'T GO OFF THE HANDLE! I TRUST HIM!

AFTER WHAT HE DID LAST NIGHT, TALKIN' YOU INTO SELLIN' OUT TO THE SCARECROW, I DON'T TRUST HIM!

BETTY TOLD US WHAT YOU DID LAST NIGHT, YOU POLECAT! HOW MUCH DID THE SCARECROW PAY YOU FOR THAT JOB?

DON'T BE A DANGED FOOL, ERNIE! I DID THAT TO WEAKEN THE SCARECROW'S ARMY HERE AT THE RIVER!

THEN WE'LL RIDE IN ON THEM RIGHT NOW, AN' BLAST THEM OUT OF THERE!

NO, YOU HOTHEAD, THEY'LL MOW YOU DOWN IN A FRONTAL ATTACK! WAIT AN' WE'LL...

WAIT, HUH! WAIT UNTIL THE SCARECROW GETS BACK SO'S YOU CAN SELL MORE OF US DOWN THE RIVER? WE'VE GOT YOU TABBED RIGHT NOW, YOU COYOTE! WE'LL FIX YOU FIRST, THEN GET YOUR PARTNERS! GET HIM, MEN!

WITH A MIGHTY LEAP, STEEL DARTS AWAY IN A SWERVING, TWISTING RUN, AND--BY SOME MIRACLE--THE KID RIDES, UNSCATHED, OUT OF THE HAIL OF LEAD!

THE CRAZY LOONS! I'LL HAVE TO SAVE THEM IN SPITE OF THEMSELVES! IF I CAN ONLY GET TO THE SCARECROW'S RANCH BEFORE THEY BEGIN THEIR ATTACK!

ZING-G-

POW-W-!

JUST AS I FIGGERED--NO ONE HERE BUT THE COOK!

HEY, YOU, WHAT... OWWWW!

COOKIE, GRAB A CAYUSE AN' HIGH-TAIL IT... AND DON'T COME BACK! *PRONTO!*

SCARECROW RANCH

THIS PLACE'LL GO UP LIKE A LIGHTED MATCH!

MEANWHILE, BACK AT THE RIVER, THE RANCHERS HAVE BEGUN THEIR MOVE AGAINST THE SCARECROW'S ENTRENCHED FORCES!

HOLD YOUR FIRE, MEN, UNTIL THEY GET CLOSER! HAW! HAW! THIS'S GONNA BE A MASSACRE! TOO BAD THE SCARECROW WENT WITH THE LATIMER HERD--HE'D SHORE GET A KICK OUTTA THIS!

HEY, SQUINT, LOOK! THE RANCH'S ON FIRE!

C'MON, MEN! WE GOTTA SAVE THE RANCH! GRAB YOUR CAYUSES!

OUT IN THE OPEN NOW, LITERALLY CAUGHT BETWEEN TWO LINES OF FIRE, THE SCARECROW'S FORCES BREAK UNDER A WITHERING FIRE POURED INTO THEM BY THE DETERMINED RANCHMEN!

THE BUZZARDS... THEY TRICKED US! EVERY MAN FER HIMSELF... ARRRGGHH!

THE BATTLE IS SOON OVER, THE SCARECROW'S GUN-PROUD HARDCASES DEAD, WOUNDED OR RIDING AWAY AS FAST AS THEIR HARRIED HORSE-FLESH CAN CARRY THEM!

BETTY, YOU HELP WITH THE WOUNDED! YOU OTHER MEN, LAY THE DYNAMITE TO BLAST THIS RUBBLE OUT OF THE RIVER!

ERNIE, THIS PROVES THAT KID COLT WAS FOR US ALL ALONG! IT MUST HAVE BEEN HIM WHO SET FIRE TO THE SCARECROW'S RANCH TO DRAW THE KILLERS OUT OF THE ENTRENCHMENTS!

YOU'RE RIGHT, BETTY! HERE HE COMES NOW, AN' BELIEVE ME HE CAN HAVE MY APOLOGY AN' ANY-THING ELSE I'VE GOT!

NEVER MIND THAT NOW! YOU, MISS BETTY, AN' ME ARE RIDIN' TO STORYVILLE, WHERE THE SCARECROW DROVE MISS BETTY'S CATTLE! LET'S GO!

KID, I WANTA APOLOGIZE! WE DIDN'T SAVVY THAT...

THE NEXT DAY, AT THE OFFICE OF THE EASTERN CATTLE BUYERS' ASSOCIATION IN STORYVILLE!

$14,099... $15,000... YUP, IT'S ALL HERE! HAW! HAW! WHAT A PROFIT! I ONLY PAID $500 FER THEM STEERS!

HERE'S YOUR $500 BACK, SCARECROW!

WHAT KIND OF A RANNIGAN YOU TRYIN' TO PULL, MISTER? I BOUGHT THOSE CATTLE FROM BETTY LATIMER, FAIR AN' SQUARE! HERE'S THE BILL O' SALE TO PROVE IT!

WHAT YOU OVERLOOKED, SCARECROW, IS THE FACT THAT MISS BETTY'S ONLY 17 YEARS OLD, GET IT? SHE'S UNDER AGE SO COULDN'T LEGALLY SELL THE CATTLE! THE BILL OF SALE WITH HER SIGNATURE ON IT ISN'T WORTH THE PAPER IT'S WRITTEN ON!

WE'LL TAKE THE MONEY, AN' THANKYA KINDLY FOR SAVIN' MISS BETTY THE TROUBLE OF HIRIN' MEN AN' MAKIN' THAT LONG DRIVE TO MARKET!

YOU AIN'T GETTIN' AWAY WITH THIS, YA LOW DOWN SKUNK! BURN I'M DOWN, MEN!

GOOD-BYE, SCARECROW!

IT'S TIME FOR ME TO RIDE ON, MISS BETTY! THOSE GUN SHOTS'LL BRING THE LAW, AN' I HAVE MY OWN REASONS FOR NOT BEIN' HERE TO MEET HIM! ADIOS AN' GOOD LUCK!

OH, HOW CAN WE EVER THANK YOU!

WHAT'S THE SHOOTIN', HERE? SOMEBODY SAID KID COLT WAS IN TOWN--IS HE HERE?

NOPE! YOU'VE MISSED HIM, SHERIFF! MEBBE YOU'RE LUCKY YOU DID!

MEBBE YOU'RE RIGHT, SON! HE'S DONE SOME MIGHTY FINE THINGS, I HEAR TELL, EVEN IF HE IS AN OUTLAW!

OUTLAW? IF MORE MEN WHO WALK WITHIN THE LAW WERE LIKE HIM, THE WEST WOULD BE A BETTER PLACE TO LIVE IN!

THE END

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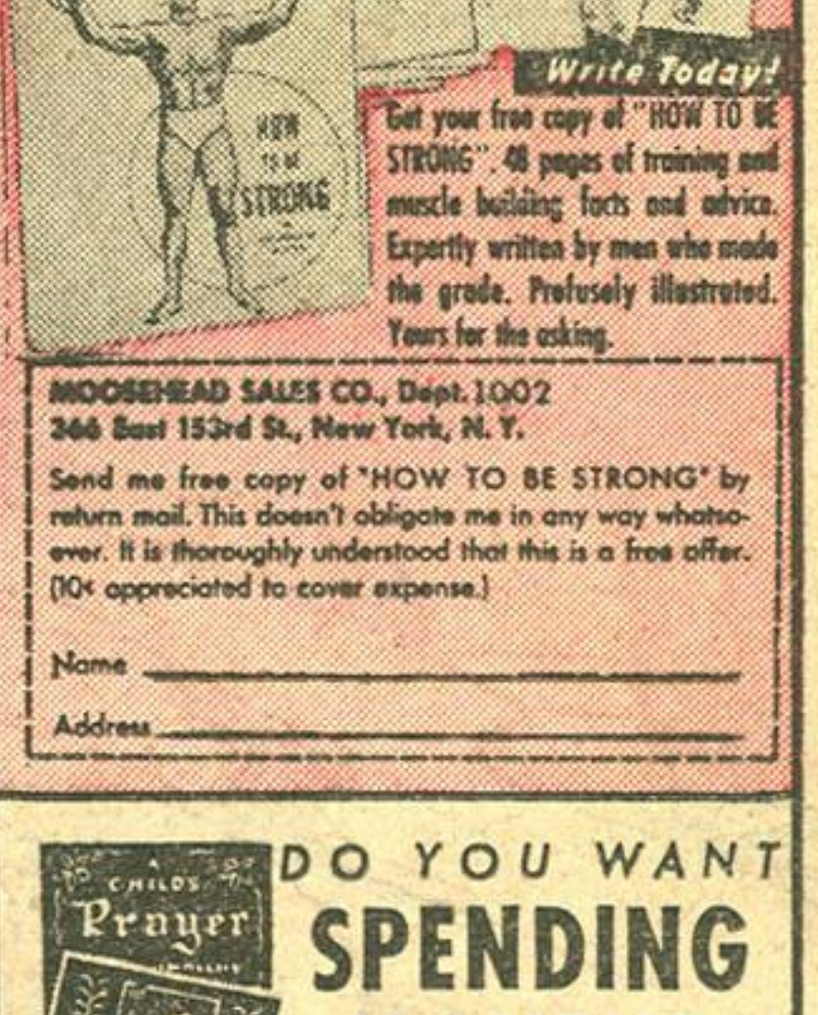

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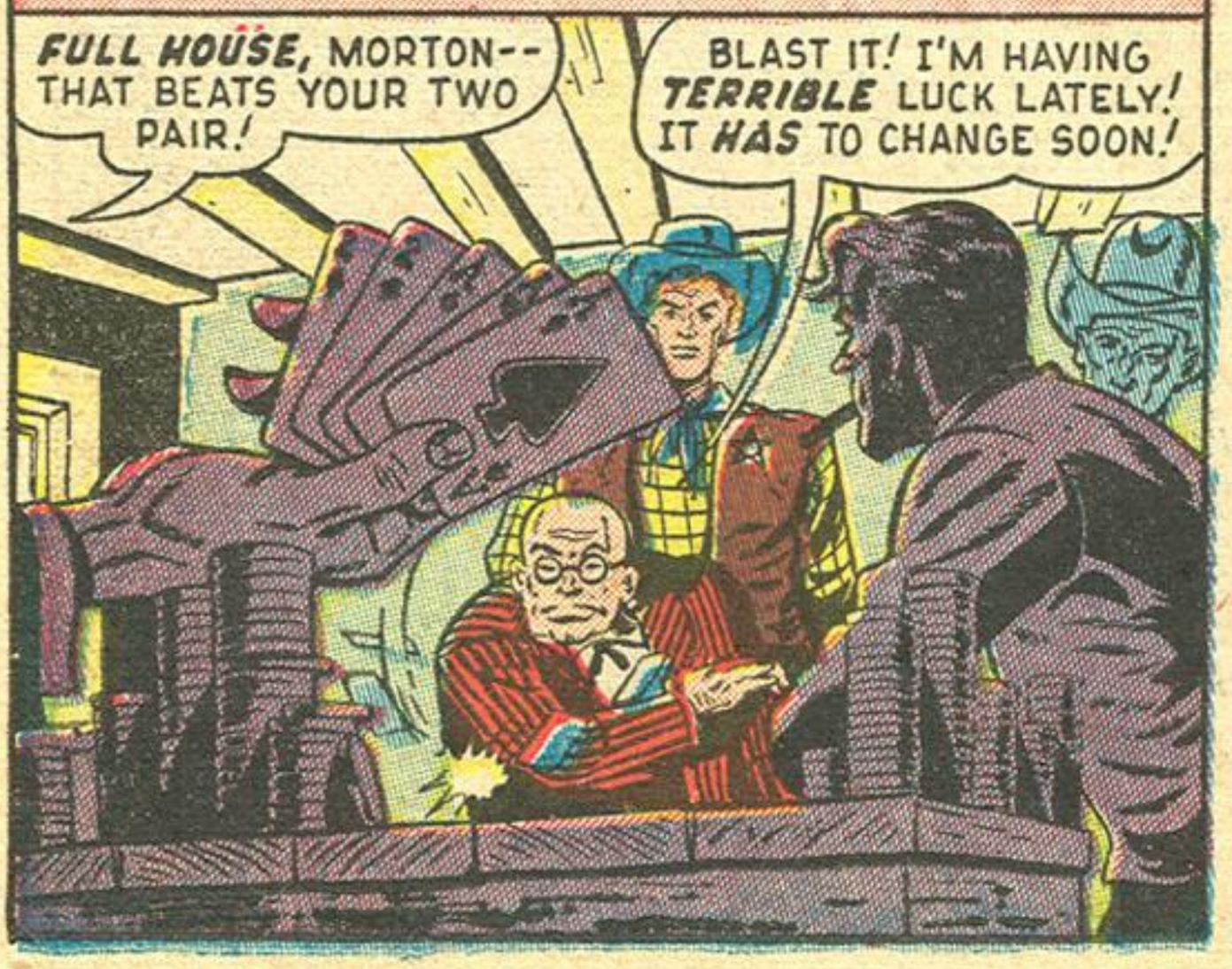

I'LL TRY ANOTHER HUNDRED BEFORE I QUIT FOR THE NIGHT! THIS CAN'T GO ON FOREVER!
I'M GLAD TUH OBLIGE, MORTON! YOUR LUCK HAS BEEN BAD! LUCKY YOU'RE A BANKER! HA, HA!
1

SUDDENLY AN EAR-SHATTERING EXPLOSION ROCKS RED DOG!

BA-RO-O-M!

SOMEBODY GET THE SHERIFF--THE BANK'S BEEN ROBBED!

WHOEVER DID IT JUST DIDN'T ROB IT--THEY DANGED NEAR WRECKED IT! COME ON, MORTON, SHOW ME WHAT'S MISSIN'!

SWIFTLY BLAZE AND THE BANKER RUSH TO THE BANK!

CLEANED OUT! SHERIFF, CATCH THOSE MEN!

IT'LL BE TOUGH TO TRAIL THEM ON A NIGHT LIKE THIS, BUT I'LL TRY! ANYTHING ELSE MISSIN'?

LOOKS LIKE THEY TOOK THE TIME TO GO THROUGH YOUR RECORDS, MORTON! ANY OF YOUR BOOKS MISSIN'?

ER-WH-WHY, YES--THERE DOES SEEM TO BE A LEDGER MISSING! NEVER MIND THAT--GET AFTER THOSE BANDITS, SHERIFF!

SHERIFF BLAZE CARSON TAKES THE TRAIL--A TRAIL OBSCURED BY DARKNESS AND A DRIVING RAIN!

THEY'LL MAKE A CLEAN GETAWAY UNLESS I GET SOME BREAKS! FUNNY THEY TOOK THOSE BANK RECORDS!

HOURS LATER, AS THE FIERY FINGERS OF DAWN MARK THE EASTERN SKY, BLAZE CARSON ADMITS HE'S LICKED!

I'M LICKED UNLESS--UNLESS A HUNCH I HAVE TURNS OUT TO BE RIGHT! BACK TO TOWN--BUT I DON'T WANT ANYONE TO KNOW I'M THERE!

MORTON'S *TELLER*, BOB ROSS, LIVES HERE! HE'S GOIN' TO DO ME A FAVOR AND KEEP QUIET ABOUT IT! IF MY HUNCH IS *WRONG* AND MORTON *FOUND OUT*, HE COULD MAKE IT EMBARRASSIN'!

DULL, CLOUDY DAYLIGHT HAS BROKEN, WHEN BLAZE RIDES THROUGH THE MUDDY SLUSH OF RED DOG'S STREETS AGAIN!

WHO'S -- OH, IT'S THE *SHERIFF!* ANYTHING *WRONG?*

THE BANK WAS ROBBED! COME ON OUT HERE, I WANT YOU TO DO ME A *FAVOR!*

I WANT YOU TO GET ME A *LEDGER* SIMILAR TO ONE THAT WAS TAKEN FROM THE BANK LAST NIGHT! BRING IT TO ME AT THE HOTEL, ROOM 12, AND DON'T TELL *ANYONE* YOU *SAW* ME!

I DON'T UNDERSTAND -- BUT I'LL DO IT, SHERIFF!

I'LL SNEAK INTO ROOM 12! I KNOW IT'S EMPTY AND IT OVERLOOKS THE BANK ENTRANCE!

HOTEL ROYAL SERVICE ENTRANCE

THE LEDGER IS DELIVERED BY THE YOUNG TELLER! AND BLAZE SETTLES DOWN TO WAIT, AND AN HOUR LATER HIS PATIENCE IS REWARDED!

THERE'S MORTON NOW! ROSS JUST BROUGHT ME THIS LEDGER IN TIME! IF I'M RIGHT, HE'LL HEAD *STRAIGHT* FOR THE *POKER PALACE!*

BANK

LEDGER

GOIN' LIKE I FIGURED, SO FAR! I THINK I'LL USE THE BACK ENTRANCE TO THE PALACE AND SPRING THIS AS A SURPRISE!

KER ALACE

LEDGER

A LITTLE MUD WILL MAKE THIS LOOK MORE REAL! THIS IS THE BIGGEST *GAMBLE* I'VE TAKEN SINCE I WORE THIS STAR! IF IT DOESN'T WORK -- RED DOG'LL BE HUNTIN' *A NEW SHERIFF!*

IF I'M ***WRONG***--I'LL LOSE MY JOB! IF I'M ***RIGHT***-- THE NEXT FEW MINUTES WILL SEE A ***LOT*** OF ***POWDER BURNED!*** WELL, HERE GOES!

PRIVATE

HELLO, MORTON! I WANT TO ASK A FEW MORE QUESTIONS ABOUT THE ***BANK ROBBERY!*** YOU DON'T ***MIND***, DO YOU?

WHAT ARE ***YOU*** DOING HERE? YOU SHOULD BE OUT ON THE TRAIL OF THE CRIMINALS THAT ROBBED MY BANK!

MAYBE ***THAT'S*** WHAT I'M DOING ***HERE***, MORTON!

DON'T TALK LIKE A FOOL, SHERIFF! IF YOU DON'T GET AFTER THOSE MEN, I'LL HAVE YOU OUT OF OFFICE IN ***TWENTY-FOUR HOURS!***

I DON'T ***DOUBT*** THAT YOU WILL HAVE ME OUT OF OFFICE--IF MY ***HUNCH*** IS ***WRONG***, MORTON!

I LOST THE TRAIL OF THE GANG IN THE RAIN -- SO I PLAYED A HUNCH AND TRAILED ***YOU!*** IT WAS A ***GOOD*** HUNCH, MORTON!

WATCH YOUR TONGUE, SHERIFF! MEN HAVE ***DIED*** FOR LESS THAN ***THAT!***

SHOULD WE BLAST HIM, BOSS? HE'S ON TO US!

QUIET, FOOL! SHERIFF, YOU'VE MADE SOME ***PREPOSTEROUS STATEMENTS!*** YOU CAN'T ***PROVE*** THEM -- I'LL HAVE YOUR ***BADGE*** FOR THIS!

YOU'LL PUT IN A ***LONG PRISON SENTENCE*** FOR WHAT THE BANK EXAMINERS WILL FIND IN ***HERE***, MORTON! I LOST THE BANK ROBBERS' TRAIL, YES -- BUT I ***FOUND THIS LEDGER*** WHERE THEY THREW IT AWAY! ***YOU'RE WASHED UP!***

THE LEDGER! KILL HIM, YOU FOOLS!

FLAMING LEAD SPLITS THE SMOKY AIR AS THE HARD-CASE GAMBLERS CUT DOWN ON BLAZE CARSON...

SO, YOU WERE *ALL* IN ON THE BANK JOB!

HE GOT LARS AND PALEY! *FINISH HIM QUICK!*

YOU TRY IT, MORTON!

YOU'RE AS BAD AT *SHOOTIN'* AS YOU WERE AT *BANKIN'*, MORTON!

I'LL GET YOU-- YOU *MEDDLING FOOL!*

DON'T SHOOT, SHERIFF! YOU WERE *RIGHT*-- I ENGINEERED THE ROBBERY!

WHAT'S GOIN' ON! OH--IT'S YOU, SHERIFF! NEED ANY *HELP?*

WITH QUICK ACCURACY BLAZE BLASTS THE GUN FROM MORTON'S HAND! WITH HIS MEN DOWN, THE BANKER IS QUICK TO SURRENDER!

NICE GOIN', SHERIFF! I NEVER FIGURED *MORTON'D* ROB HIS *OWN BANK!*

NEITHER WOULD *I*--UNTIL I LEARNED THAT THE CROOKS HAD TAKEN THE LEDGER COVERING THE *BUSINESS* OF THE *BANK* FOR THE *LAST SIX MONTHS!*

I GET IT! YOU FOUND THE LEDGER AN' FOUND OUT THERE WAS *MONEY MISSIN'!* NICE WORK, SHERIFF!

THAT ISN'T THE LEDGER THEY TOOK--IT'S ONE *EXACTLY LIKE IT!* MORTON TOLD 'EM TO GET *RID* OF IT! *I* WALKED IN AND SAID *I FOUND IT*-- MORTON WAS *BLUFFED* AND THEY WENT FOR THEIR GUNS!

HE'D BEEN LOSING HEAVILY AT POKER, TAKING THE *BANK'S* MONEY TO *GAMBLE* WITH! HE COVERED THAT UP WITH A ROBBERY! THE GAMBLING GANG WAS IN ON IT! THEY GOT A CUT OF THE LOOT AN' IT SUPPLIED MORTON WITH MORE MONEY TO *LOSE* TO THEM! IT WAS MORTON'S *GUILTY CONSCIENCE* THAT *TRAPPED* HIM-- A CRIMINAL'S GUILT IS THE STRONGEST WEAPON THE LAW HAS!

THE END

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MYSTERY OF THE MISSING MINE

"TAKE one step closer and I'll shoot!"

There was an emphatic note to the speaker's voice, and Kid Colt knew better than to take that step.

The barrel of the rifle pointed squarely at his chest and the hands that held it did not waver. They were pretty hands, too, he thought, and it surprised him that they could hold the heavy rifle without so much as a slight tremor.

The Kid drew in his breath, and when he spoke he tried to put as much assurance into his voice as he could.

"If you'd just put up the rifle a moment, Ma'am, I'd be feeling a lot more comfortable."

For a second the girl's eyes wavered, then they steadied. "Not on your life," she snapped. "Don't think you're going to soft talk me into any trap—now get moving!"

She made a sharp, quick movement with the rifle towards the shack.

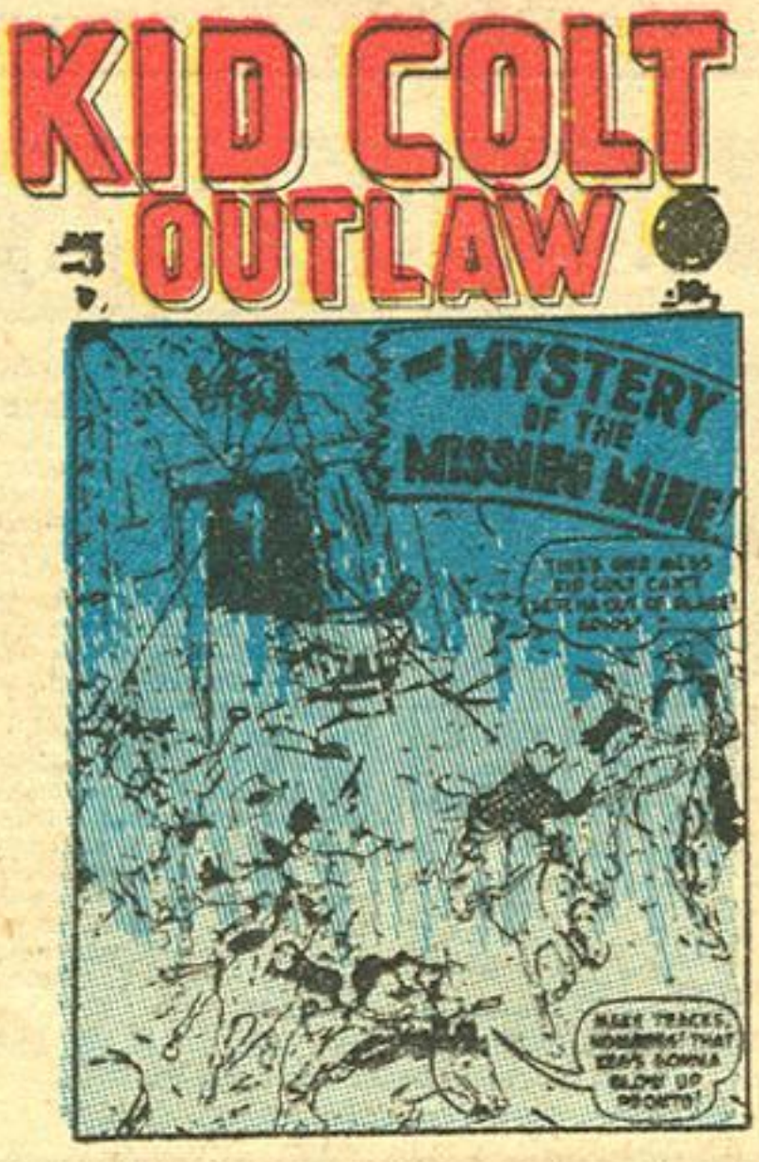
"Start walking," she commanded, "—and DON'T try anything funny."

Kid Colt shrugged his shoulders in a gesture that seemed to combine both amusement and resignation. "Okay, Ma'am," he drawled. "I was never one to argue with a lady—especially when she's carrying a rifle."

When he was about three feet from the shack, she ordered him to halt. Slowly, she edged her way towards the door, and her rifle described a wide arc as she backed her way cautiously toward it.

Her eyes never left him, and the black bore of the rifle continued to point, with deadly accuracy, at the Kid's heart. Without turning her head, she called out in a loud clear voice, "Come on out, Dad. I think I got one of the gang!"

It wasn't long before the Kid heard footsteps, then, a few moments later, an old man with a grizzled beard stepped through the doorway. He stared long and intently into the Kid's face and then turned toward the girl.



"Can't say that I recognize him as one of Blackie's gang, Janie," he said.

"That doesn't prove that he isn't," retorted the girl.

She was about to continue when the Kid interrupted her.

"I don't pretend to know what this is all about," he said, "—but if you're thinking that I'm part of a gang, you're sadly mistaken. The name is Kid Colt, and I'm on my way south. I noticed your shack and figured I could water my horse before goin' on."

He paused momentarily. "I didn't figure on this kind of a reception," he added.

"Maybe you're telling the truth, and maybe you're not," the girl replied. "Anyway we're not taking any chances. We've been having too much trouble with Blackie lately—and we're just not taking any chances."

She repeated the words with hard emphasis, and the Kid knew there was no future in further talk.

"Is it all right then if I go on?" he asked.

"You're free to go," she said. "But make sure you *keep* goin'. We'll be waiting for you if you try any back-tracking."

When the Kid sat astride his horse, he turned to face the girl and the old man.

"I'm sorry about your not trusting me," he said. "But it looks as if you're in trouble and could use a helping hand."

He paused a while, hoping his words would have a softening effect upon the defiant look in the girl's eyes. As the moments passed and there was no response, he reluctantly waved goodbye; and a moment later he was galloping down the trail.

There was something mighty fishy about all this, he thought to himself. He wasn't forgetting the kegs of dynamite, either. He had spotted them stacked up

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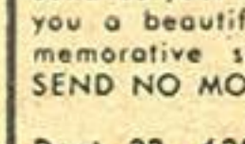

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STAMP NEWS

By KENT B. STILES

Veteran philatelic observers will not be surprised to learn that 1948 has been a prolific calendar year numerically. It will be March or April of 1949 before final figures become available so that 1948's total can be accurately known but it is possible to estimate at this writing that from 2,500 to 2,600 major and minor varieties are the output of more than 150 of the world's Governments. Not since 1942, when more than 3,000 varieties were issued, has there been a postal deluge exceeding the one in 1948.

There, in the bizonal section occupied by American and British forces the postal authorities were allowed to issue their own stamps; and as these lines are being written, 42 varieties have been recorded. In the section occupied by French forces the latter permitted Baden to have one series of stamps, Rheinland-Pfalz another, Saar another, and Wurttemberg another; this situation brought at least 65 more varieties. In the Soviet zone the Russians provided nearly 100 overprinted stamps, and in the Anglo-American part of Berlin more than 100 overprinted items appeared. Thus in this trouble spot alone more than 300 varieties were produced.

China offers another example. As newspaper readers know, political turmoil existed in China, and stamp-issuing reflects that development. Economic conditions resulted in inflation, and ever-increasingly high-denomination stamps became necessary. At least 70 varieties were issued in China.

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BUY BONDS!!!

against the side of the shack, and they just didn't make sense.

What would an old man and his daughter be doing with all that dynamite, he wondered. The thought had hardly passed through his mind, when his horse shied. In the next moment, he sensed the trouble and slid quickly to the ground. The earth trembled slightly beneath his feet, and then he heard a dull, muffled roar that grew in intensity — its swelling sound floating toward him in one continuous wave. Then, gradually, the reverberations subsided and he heard a new sound—a sound that spurred him to action! It was the sharp, flat bark of a rifle, and it was quickly followed by a series of rapid gun-fire.

A moment later, Kid Colt was galloping back down the trail in the direction of the shack. A warning sense cautioned him as he approached the clearing. Reining his horse in, he slipped quietly to the ground and stealthily made his way forward.

What he saw caused him to draw in his breath quickly. Two husky men were leading the old man and the girl away from the shack toward a nearby hill, at the point of a gun. Four other men, each of them carrying a keg of dynamite, trailed behind them.

Glancing quickly at the hill, the Kid was in for another surprise. A large section of rock had been blasted away, and there, with thin whisps of smoke still trailing from the opening, was a mine shaft that led directly into the hill itself!

One thing at a time, the Kid thought. The first thing was to save the old man and his daughter. With a quick look at the terrain, a plan formed in his mind. Slowly he edged his way, in a wide arc, until he was at the rear of the shack and out of view. Then, hugging the ground, he wormed his way to the foot of the hill and slowly he began to ascend. About fifty feet up, the hill leveled off into a sort of rocky shelf that projected outwards. Cautiously, the Kid pulled himself forward toward the lip of rock. As he neared the edge he heard voices. Slowly, he moved forward until he could see below him.

The sight that met his eyes made his blood run cold. Only a few feet below him were the old man and his daughter. They were securely bound to one of the kegs of dynamite, and an orange flame slowly licked its way down the length of fuse that extended from the barrel.

The leader of the gang, an ugly, heavy-set man with black eyes, gloated at their plight.

"This'll teach you, Blake," he chuckled. "Everyone'll think that you and your girl were blown up when you blasted the opening to the missing mine—and *I* won't tell 'em any different."

"You won't get away with it," shouted the old man. "We're expectin' Kid Colt any minute."

"Don't lie to me," sneered Blackie. "It won't help. We watched him ride outta here a half hour ago. This is one mess Kid Colt won't get you out of. Let's go boys!"

"That's what you think," a voice cried. Before Blackie could reach for his hip, he was cut down by a burst of fire and crumpled heavily to the ground. In another moment, Kid Colt, his revolver smoking, leaped from the ledge. Two of the others whipped out their guns, but a simultaneous burst from the Kid's revolvers sent them sprawling. The others, awed by the deadly gun skill, galloped down the hill.

Moving quickly, the Kid stamped out the glowing fuse, and in a few moments had set the old man and the girl free.

"Now do you mind tellin' me what this missing mine is all about?" he asked.

"Don't mind at all," said the old man. "You see, this mine was covered by an avalanche about ten years ago, and the owner, my best friend, was killed in the slide. I've been huntin' for years to find a way back in, and Blackie suspected I'd hit it sooner or later. He knew there was plenty of gold still in here and he tried to force me to take him in, but I wouldn't. When I blasted the right spot this afternoon, he was on hand to take over. If it weren't for you, Kid Colt, he would have had his way, too!"

"Forget it," said the Kid.

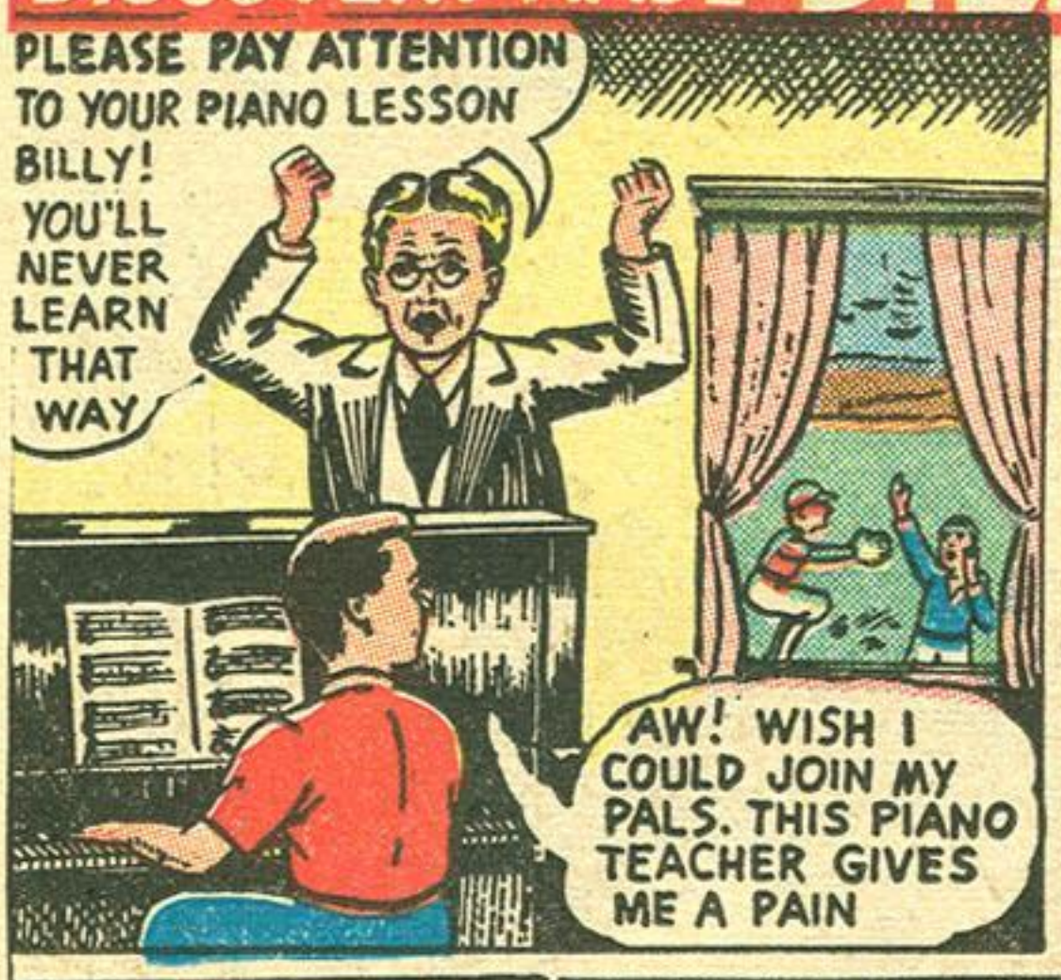
He turned to where the girl stood. The hard light he had first seen in her eyes was no longer there. Right now, he thought, they were the prettiest eyes he had seen.

"Will you ever forgive me for not trusting you?" she asked.

"Shucks, Ma'am," said the Kid, smiling. "I've forgotten it already."

THE END SL—5226

HOW A SIMPLE DISCOVERY MADE BILLY A VERY HAPPY BOY


PLEASE PAY ATTENTION TO YOUR PIANO LESSON BILLY! YOU'LL NEVER LEARN THAT WAY
AW! WISH I COULD JOIN MY PALS. THIS PIANO TEACHER GIVES ME A PAIN

HOW'D YOU LEARN TO PLAY PIANO SO WELL AND SO FAST.. BOBBY
IT'S A CINCH BILLY. WITH A SLIDE-CHORD DEVICE ANYONE CAN LEARN TO PLAY IN A JIFFY

IMAGINE DEAR, HOW MUCH MONEY WE COULD HAVE SAVED IF BILLY HAD KNOWN OF THAT SLIDE-CHORD DEVICE
AND HE WOULD HAVE PLAYED SO NICELY 2 YEARS AGO

IT'S AMAZING SHIRLEY, HOW NICELY YOU'RE PLAYING THE PIANO IN LESS THAN 5 DAYS. HOW DO I GET STARTED?
WRITE TO THE DALE SHEARS SCHOOL OF MUSIC, STRUTHERS, OHIO. THE COST IS ONLY $2 COMPLETE AND INCLUDES THE SLIDE-CHORD DEVICE, 25 EASY LESSONS AND 33 POPULAR SONGS-ALL SOLD ON A MONEY-BACK GUARANTEE. JUST CLIP THE COUPON, TOM. YOU'LL NEVER REGRET IT!

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KID COLT

OUT OF THE MYSTERY AND ADVENTURE THAT MAKE UP THE OLD WEST GALLOPS AMERICA'S MOST DASHING COWBOY!

"HIS GREATEST GAMBLE!"

3969

KID COLT IS NO GAMBLER--HIS WORKING TOOLS ARE THE SHINY SIX-GUNS HANGING IN TIED-DOWN HOLSTERS! HE STACKS THEM AGAINST A CROOKED DECK, BETTING HIS PAIR AGAINST A FULL HOUSE OF MURDERERS AND THIEVES...AS HE BUCKS THE WHEEL!

LOOKS LIKE A SWARM OF BUZZARDS COMING IN FOR A MEAL, STEEL! LET'S TAKE A LOOK AT THEIR INTENDED DINNER...

LOOKS AS THOUGH WE JUST GOT HERE IN TIME! THOSE BUZZARDS WOULD'VE BEEN AT WORK IN A FEW MINUTES MORE! WHAT HAPPENED, STRANGER, LOSE YOUR HORSE?

WATER! FOR HEAVEN'S SAKE, GIVE ME A DRINK!

YOU'LL BE ALL RIGHT AS SOON AS YOU GET THAT DOWN, PARDNUH! CAREFUL --DON'T TRY TO DRINK IT ALL RIGHT OFF!

(GLUG, GLUG!) AAHH... THAT'S DELICIOUS!

REVIVED BY THE WATER, THE TENDERFOOT REGAINS HIS FEET WITH KID COLT'S HELP, THEN...

MY NAME IS CANNON, JOHN CANNON! I ARRIVED IN WOLF PASS YESTERDAY AFTERNOON--A MAN THERE WAS FRIENDLY AND INVITED ME TO SIT IN A CARD GAME WITH HIM! SHORTLY, I FOUND MYSELF WITHOUT MONEY, AND WHEN I PROTESTED, THEY ASSAULTED ME AND THREW ME OUT HERE TO DIE! I WOULD HAVE, IF YOU HADN'T COME ALONG, MR...?

JUST CALL ME KID COLT! LET'S GO BACK TO TOWN AN' FIND THIS "FRIENDLY" FELLAH YOU MENTIONED! HE *MIGHT* WANT TO RETURN YOUR MONEY!

THAT'S THE PLACE WHERE I LOST MY MONEY! I SOMEHOW HAD THE IMPRESSION THAT THE GAME WASN'T... WELL... HONEST!

THAT'S PUTTIN' IT PRETTY SOFT, CANNON! I'D LIKE TO TAKE A CRACK AT THEIR GAME... THAT IS, IF I HAD ANY MONEY TO PLAY WITH!... I THINK I'LL *BORROW* SOME O' THEIRS! YOU BETTER WAIT OUT HERE UNTIL I SEND FOR YOU!

HAWK ROWANS

ROWAN HAS A NICE LITTLE SET-UP HERE! A TENDERFOOT LIKE CANNON HAD AS MUCH CHANCE HERE AS A LI'L LAMB IN A WOLF DEN! THERE'S A PROSPEROUS LOOKIN' GAME...

THIS IS FOR ME! THAT PILE O' DOUGH WILL GIVE ME A NICE START IN MY GAMBLIN' CAREER... ESPECIALLY SINCE NONE OF THEM WORKED TO GET IT!

SUDDENLY, TWO SHOTS CRASH THROUGH THE TALK AND THE LAMPS GO OUT! KID COLT MOVES SWIFTLY IN THE SEMI-DARKNESS, SCOOPING UP THE MONEY IN FRONT OF THE GAMBLERS!

STOP! WATCH YER MONEY, THERE'S A ... *UNGH!*

YOU TALK TOO MUCH, FRIEND!

AS SUDDENLY AS THEY WENT OUT, MORE LAMPS GO ON! KID COLT IS CAUGHT!

IT'S A HOLD-UP! GRAB HIM!

I WOULDN'T MOVE, FRIEND! THESE GUNS ARE LIABLE TO GO OFF AT THE WRONG TIME--LIKE WHEN THEY'RE CENTERED ON YOUR STICK-PIN!

I WARNED YOU!

BAM!

I THANK YOU FOR THE HOSPITALITY, GENTLEMEN! I'LL BE BACK TO SEE YOU--*REAL SOON!*

TAKE IT EASY! HE'S NOT GOIN' ANYWHERE! THAT ROOM HASN'T ANY OTHER DOORS OR WINDOWS! WHEN HE COMES OUTTA THERE, HE'LL COME OUT FEET FIRST--ON A DOOR! HE'S CORNERED!

WHEN I GIVE THE SIGNAL, RUSH HIM! HE'LL BE SO FULL OF SLUGS, IT'LL TAKE SIX OF YOU TO CARRY HIM OUT! *ONE -- TWO --*

THE SIGNAL IS NEVER GIVEN! JUST AS THE GUNMEN REACH THE DOOR, IT BURSTS OPEN! KID COLT STRIKES EVEN BEFORE THE MEN DO, TAKING THEM BY SURPRISE!

BAM!

BAM!

BAM!

SORRY, MEN, THIS ISN'T MY DAY FOR DYIN'! ANYONE ELSE WANT TO CALL ME WHILE I'VE GOT THE IRONS HANDY?

WHY I... NO, PUT 'EM UP! YOU'LL HAVE NO MORE TROUBLE HERE!

HAWK ROWAN, GAMBLER, IS USED TO COMPUTING ODDS! HE REALIZES THAT THE PAIR OF DEATH-DEALING COLTS IS THE HIGH HAND SO HE ACTS ACCORDINGLY...

THE EXCITEMENT IS OVER, MEN! JUST A LITTLE MISUNDERSTANDING, THAT'S ALL! ED, YOU AND SHADY DRAG THOSE MEN OUTSIDE AND GET BURYIN' SAM!

MAKE YOURSELF AT HOME, STRANGER! THERE'S POKER, ROULETTE OR CHUCK-A-LUCK--NAME YOUR POISON!

I'LL TRY POKER, ROWAN!

I CAME IN WHEN I HEARD THE SHOTS! YOU'RE NOT GOING TO PLAY, ARE YOU? THIS IS THE GANG THAT TOOK MY MONEY! THEY'RE CROOKS, YOU CAN'T WIN!

WATCH AND SEE, CANNON! SOMETIMES YOU DON'T HAVE TO HOLD THE CARDS TO TAKE THE POT!

YOU DON'T MIND IF I SIT IN A WHILE, DO YOU, GENTS? I FEEL LUCKY!

YOUR MONEY IS AS GOOD AS ANYONE ELSE'S, FRIEND! DRAW UP A CHAIR!

KID COLT *KNOWS* IT'S A CROOKED GAME! HOW CAN HE BUCK MARKED CARDS AND A SLEIGHT-OF-HAND DEALER?

YOU KNOW, I'M *RUSTY!* I HAVEN'T PLAYED POKER SINCE I KILLED A CROOKED DEALER ABOUT A MONTH BACK! SLICK DEALERS MAKE ME *MAD*! YOU WOULDN'T KNOW OF ANY, WOULD YOU?

THIS IS AN HONEST GAME, STRANGER!

THESE ARE PRETTY NICE CARDS! I'LL BET THE WORKS!

I HAVE NICE CARDS, TOO--MEBBE I'LL CALL YOU!

NICE CARDS? THE KID'S HAND SHOWS NOTHING HIGHER THAN A PAIR OF EIGHTS, BUT...

YEP, I'VE GOT A MIGHTY NICE HAND! I'LL CALL YOUR BET AND...

THE GAMBLER HAS *FOUR ACES!* HOW CAN THE KID WIN?

I *RAISE* ONE COLT, *LOADED AN' READY FOR ACTION!* I HAVE A PAIR OF EIGHTS--YOU *CAN'T* BEAT THAT, CAN YOU?

I WAS ONLY *BLUFFIN'*, STRANGER! YOU WIN THE POT!

IN THE MEANTIME--HAWK ROWAN STACKS A NEW DECK!

THERE'S A THOUSAND DOLLARS IN IT FOR YOU, IF YOU GET HIM FIRST SHOT! AN' YOU'LL BE CLEAR WITH THE LAW! I RECOGNIZED HIM WHEN HE CAME IN! HE'S KID COLT, A WANTED OUTLAW! REMEMBER--*DON'T MISS!*

DON'T WORRY, HAWK! I WON'T MISS!

THE SIGHTS ARE CENTERED SQUARELY ON THE UNSUSPECTING KID AND THE TRIGGER IS SLOWLY SQUEEZED TIGHTER AND TIGHTER...

ROWAN HAS A DRY GULCHER PLANTED! I'VE GOT TO GET *HIM* BEFORE HE GETS *ME!*

THAT WAS CLOSE!

SORRY ABOUT THAT, STRANGER! THOSE THINGS HAPPEN, HEH! HEH! GLAD WE HAD THE PLEASURE OF YOUR COMPANY--DROP IN AGAIN!

I'M NOT LEAVIN', ROWAN! I STILL FEEL LUCKY! I'M GOING TO TRY YOUR ROULETTE WHEEL!

THERE'S SURE TO BE A BRAKE ON THAT WHEEL, SO THE HOUSE MAN CAN CONTROL THE WINNING NUMBERS! ROWAN'S KIND NEVER GIVES A SUCKER AN EVEN BREAK!

KID COLT IS RIGHT! THE HOUSE MAN'S FOOT PRESSES ON A BULGE IN THE CARPET--THIS IS THE BREAK THE KID EXPECTED!

THE HOUSE WINS AGAIN! MAKE YOUR PLAYS, GENTLEMEN!

IT'S A CROOKED GAME AND THE KID KNOWS IT, *BUT* HE'S GOING TO PLAY ANYHOW!

I'M PLAYIN' NUMBER ELEVEN, MISTER, AN' *I'M EXPECTIN' TO WIN!* YOU'LL GIVE ME A *BRAKE*, WON'T YOU? I'M A MIGHTY SORE LOSER!

THE WHEEL SPINS--THE LITTLE BALL BOUNCES AROUND AND THEN--THE WINNER IS *NUMBER ELEVEN!*

NUMBER ELEVEN WINS! YOU WIN, MISTER, HERE'S YOUR MONEY!

YUH FOOL! WHAT'S THE IDEA, LOSIN' MY MONEY ON PURPOSE LIKE THAT? IF YOU KEEP THIS UP, BURYIN' SAM IS GOING TO PAY YOU A VISIT!

I WOULDA BEEN KILLED ANYHOW! ANY TIME THAT GUNSLINGER PLAYS AT MY TABLE, HE'S A WINNER!

HAWK ROWAN REALIZES HE'S A RUINED MAN IF HE DOESN'T STOP KID COLT! HE MARSHALS HIS MEN--A GROUP OF CUTTHROATS AND MURDERERS!

GET READY TO GUN THE STRANGER IN A FEW MINUTES, RANCE! THERE'LL BE PLENTY OF US SHOOTIN' SO IT'LL BE AN EASY JOB!

RIGHT, BOSS, I'LL BE THERE!

THEY'RE FIXIN' TUH GANG UP ON YUH, STRANGER! THERE'S A FEW OF US C'N STAND BY YUH WHEN TH' TROUBLE STARTS! WE'VE ALL BEEN TAKEN BY THIS CROOKED SETUP!

THANKS, PARDNUH! I SAW THE WORD PASSED, BUT I DIDN'T KNOW IF ANYBODY ELSE WOULD SIDE WITH ME!

JOHN, I WANT YOU TO DO ME A FAVOR! GO OUT AND SEE IF YOU C'N FIND A MINISTER! HURRY UP, THINGS ARE GOING TO START POPPIN' ANY MINUTE!

OKAY, KID, BUT I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU WANT A MINISTER FOR!

A MINUTE LATER, HAWK ROWAN GIVES THE SIGNAL AND THE PLACE ERUPTS IN A ROAR OF GUNSHOTS!

BAM! BAM!

BAM! BAM! BAM!

THIS IS BETTER THAN I THOUGHT IT'D BE! I DIDN'T *EXPECT* HELP!

I C'N SHOOT BETTER FROM HERE! COME ON OUT, ROWAN, AN' TAKE YOUR CHANCES LIKE A MAN!

ONCE I KILL HIM, THE OTHERS WILL QUIT! I HAVE TO MAKE SURE...

I'LL GET...

NOBODY! YOU'RE FINISHED, ROWAN!

HAWK ROWAN AND HIS GANG ARE WIPED OUT! A COMMUNITY HAS BEEN REMOVED FROM THE STRANGLE HOLD OF EVIL, HEADED BY THE CROOKED GAMBLER!

WELL, ROWAN AND HIS BOYS ARE WIPED OUT! ARE *YOU* GONNA RUN THE PLACE NOW?

THAT'S WHAT HAD ME WORRIED, UNTIL I THOUGHT OF SENDING FOR THE MINISTER! HERE HE IS NOW!

I'M NO GAMBLER, REVEREND, AN' I DON'T LIKE MONEY ENOUGH TO KEEP THIS! I THOUGHT, IF YOU DON'T MIND, YOU'D ACCEPT IT FOR A CHURCH! YOU COULD EVEN USE IT TO CONVERT ROWAN'S GAMBLIN' HALL!

THANK YOU, SIR! I'M SURE THAT THE GOOD THAT THIS MONEY WILL DO, WILL WIPE OUT THE MEMORY OF HOW IT WAS GAINED! THIS BUILDING WILL MAKE A VERY FINE CHURCH WITH A FEW CHANGES! I'LL ASK THE SHERIFF! I JUST SAW HIM COMING DOWN THE STREET NOW!

THAT'S ENOUGH FOR KID COLT! SHERIFFS HAVE A FUNNY WAY OF LOOKING AT THINGS--SUCH AS ARRESTING OUTLAWS! KID COLT GAINS HIS HORSE JUST AS THE SHERIFF ARRIVES!

LET 'IM GO, SHERIFF!

LET ME GO, YOU FOOLS! I JUST WANTED TO SHAKE HIS HAND FOR WHAT HE DID TUH ROWAN AN' HIS GANG!

THE END

MARVEL COMIC GROUP

a letter to our readers and their PARENTS!

HI, FRIENDS:

It has been reliably reported that in England, back in the 18th Century, book stores were called "slop shops of literature," simply because they sold novels. And that was the century in which some of our greatest classics were written; the century of Dafoe, who wrote *Robinson Crusoe*, and Swift and his *Gulliver's Travels*. It was also the century of Dr. Samuel Johnson, one of the brightest stars in the history of English literature. And it was Dr. Johnson who most vociferously defended the right of booksellers to sell the new, much abused novels and the right of authors to express themselves in this medium if they desired.

But what Dr. Johnson defended most enthusiastically was the right of the public to *read what they wanted to read*. And what we are defending is the right of youngsters to read whichever they like of the many, many good, clean comics currently being published.

Just as the critics of the 18th Century rapped the books which are now classics, in the same way there are critics of today, screaming and tearing out their hair, because a new kind of magazine, still in its infancy, is not to their liking. And as in the case of the novel, it is still too early for any man to pass judgment on the comics.

Let these critics of today look to their history. Let them decide if they want to be remembered as the 20th Century counterpart of the people who called Robinson Crusoe "slop".

And let the people of America decide if they want to be swayed by critics exercising premature judgment . . . or if they want to wait and watch, and soon realize that most comic magazines are really good, clean, healthful and entertaining reading matter.

THE EDITORS,
MARVEL COMIC GROUP

P. S.—Remember: Dr. Jean Thompson, School Psychiatrist, Child Guidance Bureau, New York City Board of Education, is now our Editorial Consultant. Dr. Thompson's professional examination of our magazines, as advisor to our staff, (see Page 1) is your guarantee that the Marvel Comic Group magazines are striving to bring you the very best in reading matter . . . and it is also your best argument that no one should ever take away your right to read these magazines.

RED UNIT

ALL WESTERN WINNERS
BLAZE CARSON
BLONDE PHANTOM
CAPTAIN AMERICA
CINDY
COMEDY COMICS
GEORGIE AND JUDY
HEDY DeVINE
HUMAN TORCH
JEANIE
JOKER COMICS
KID COLT
LANA
MARGIE
MARVEL MYSTERY COMICS
MILLIE THE MODEL
NELLIE THE NURSE
PATSY WALKER
SUB MARINER
TEEN COMICS
TESSIE THE TYPIST
TEX MORGAN
TEX TAYLOR
TWO GUN KID
WILD WESTERN
WILLIE

BLUE-YELLOW UNIT

ALL TRUE CRIME CASES
COMPLETE MYSTERY
CRIMEFIGHTERS ALWAYS WIN
FRANKIE AND LANA
GAY COMICS
IDEAL COMICS
JUNIOR MISS
JUSTICE COMICS
LAWBREAKERS ALWAYS LOSE
MITZI'S BOY FRIEND
MY ROMANCE
OSCAR

Send Secret Messages With The LONE RANGER SILVER BULLET BALL PEN SET

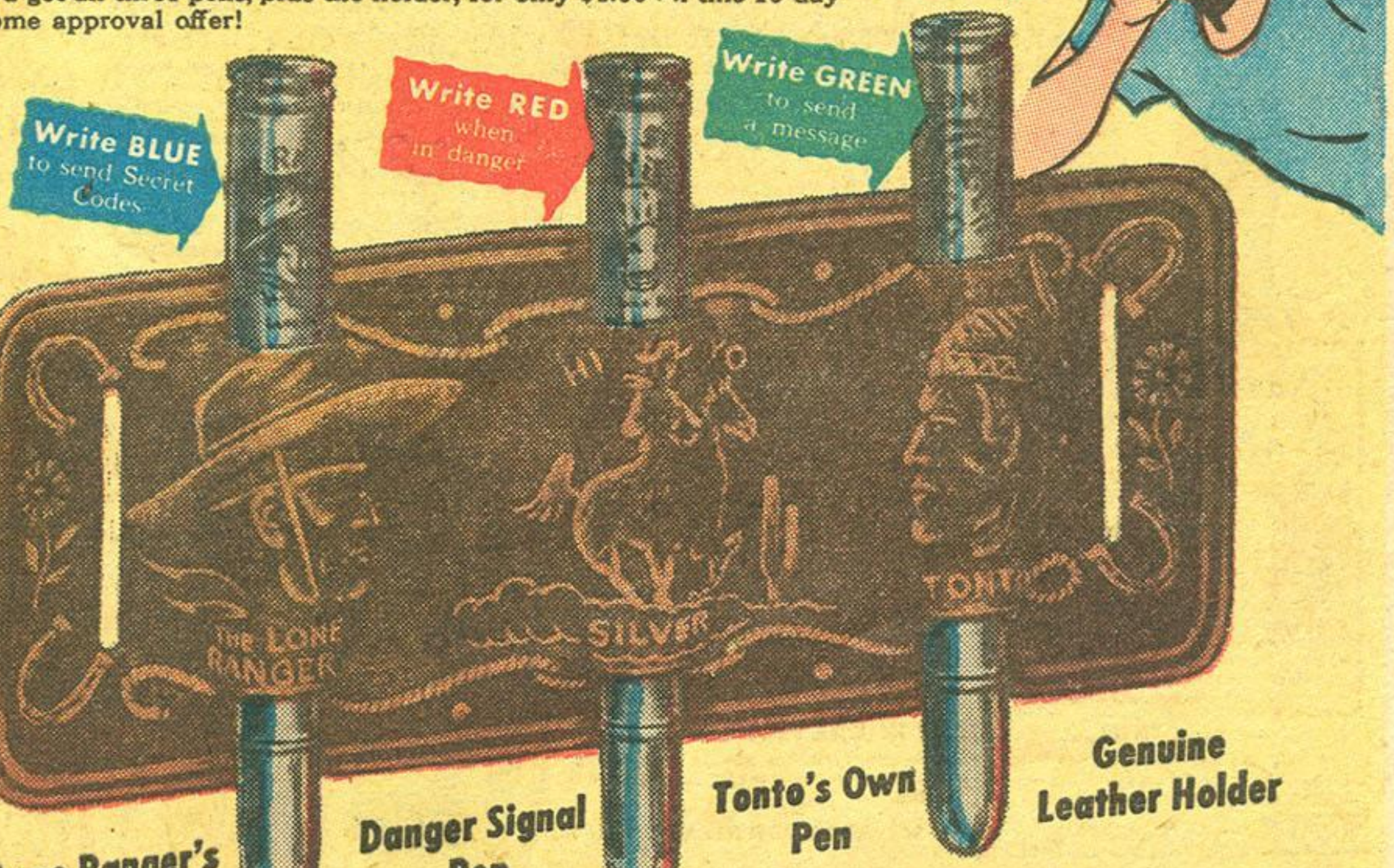
An Everlast Product

TRY IT OUT FOR 10 DAYS FREE!

HEY kids, here's your chance to get the Lone Ranger's own Silver Bullet Pen Set! *Three* smooth-writing pens—each one shaped just like the silver bullets the Lone Ranger has in his gun belt! Each pen writes a different color—BLUE, RED, GREEN—*and each one writes up to three years!* But that isn't all! Besides these three secret code pens, you get a snappy-looking genuine leather belt cartridge holster. Attach it to your belt and you always have the Lone Ranger pens ready to use, wherever you are. What's more, this leather holder is beautifully embossed with pictures of the Lone Ranger himself, Silver and Tonto! And best of all, you get all three pens, *plus* the holder, for only $1.00 on this 10-day home approval offer!

WEAR IT ON YOUR BELT—WRITE YOUR OWN SECRET CODES!

Only $1.00 Per Set



Lone Ranger's Own Pen

Danger Signal Pen

Tonto's Own Pen

Genuine Leather Holder

SEND NO MONEY

Send no money to get this official Lone Ranger Silver Bullet Ball Pen Set. Just mail coupon. When the postman brings your Lone Ranger set to your door, pay him only $1.00 plus postage and delivery. If, at the end of 10 days, you don't agree that this is the greatest bargain you've ever seen, return the pens and holder—and your money will be cheerfully refunded. But hurry! Be first in your neighborhood to get this wonderful pen set! Mail coupon—NOW.

FUN INDUSTRIES, 45 E. 17 ST., N. Y. 3, N. Y.

FUN INDUSTRIES, Dept. PB5
45 E. 17 St., New York 3, N. Y.

Rush me_____ Lone Ranger Silver Bullet Pen Sets complete with leather holders. On arrival I will pay postman only $1.00 each plus postage and delivery. If I am not satisfied for any reason at all, I'll return them within 10 days, and you will refund my money.

Name .....

Address .....

City.....Zone.....State.....

NOTE: Send cash, check, or money order with this coupon, and we pay postage. Same refund guarantee.

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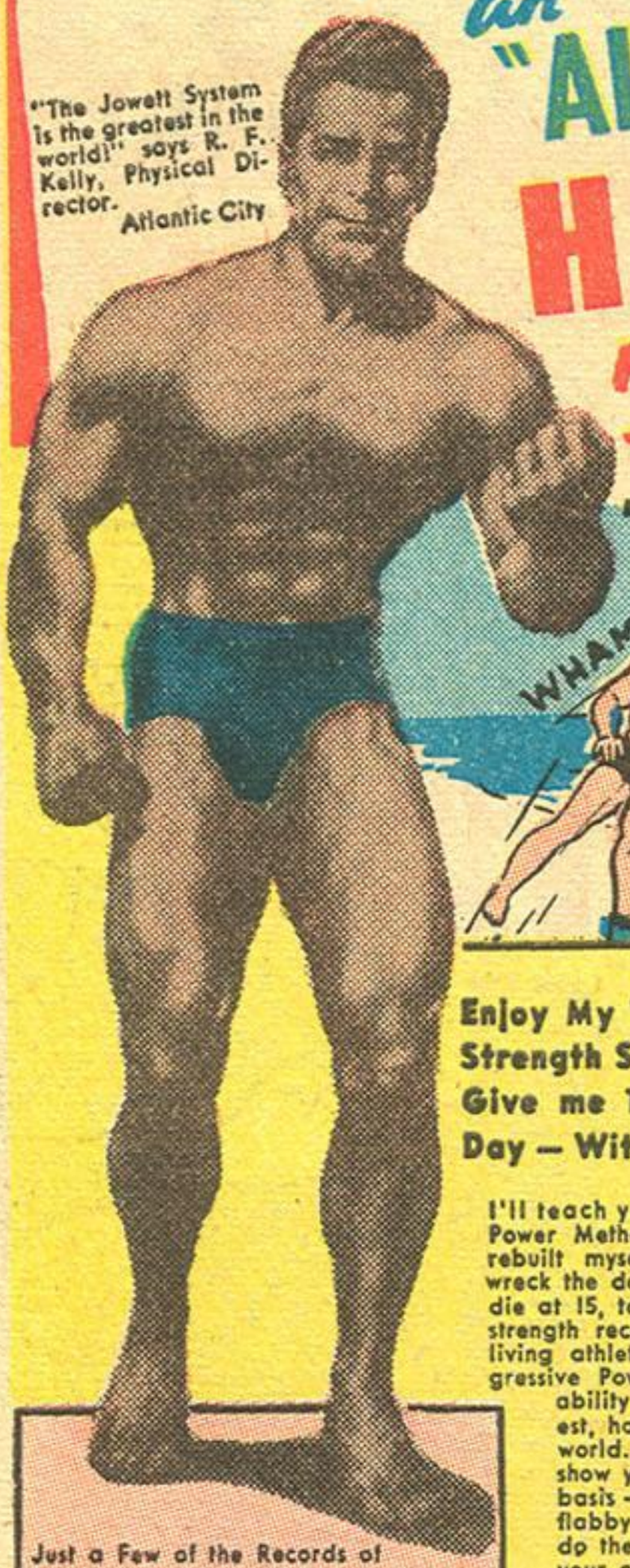

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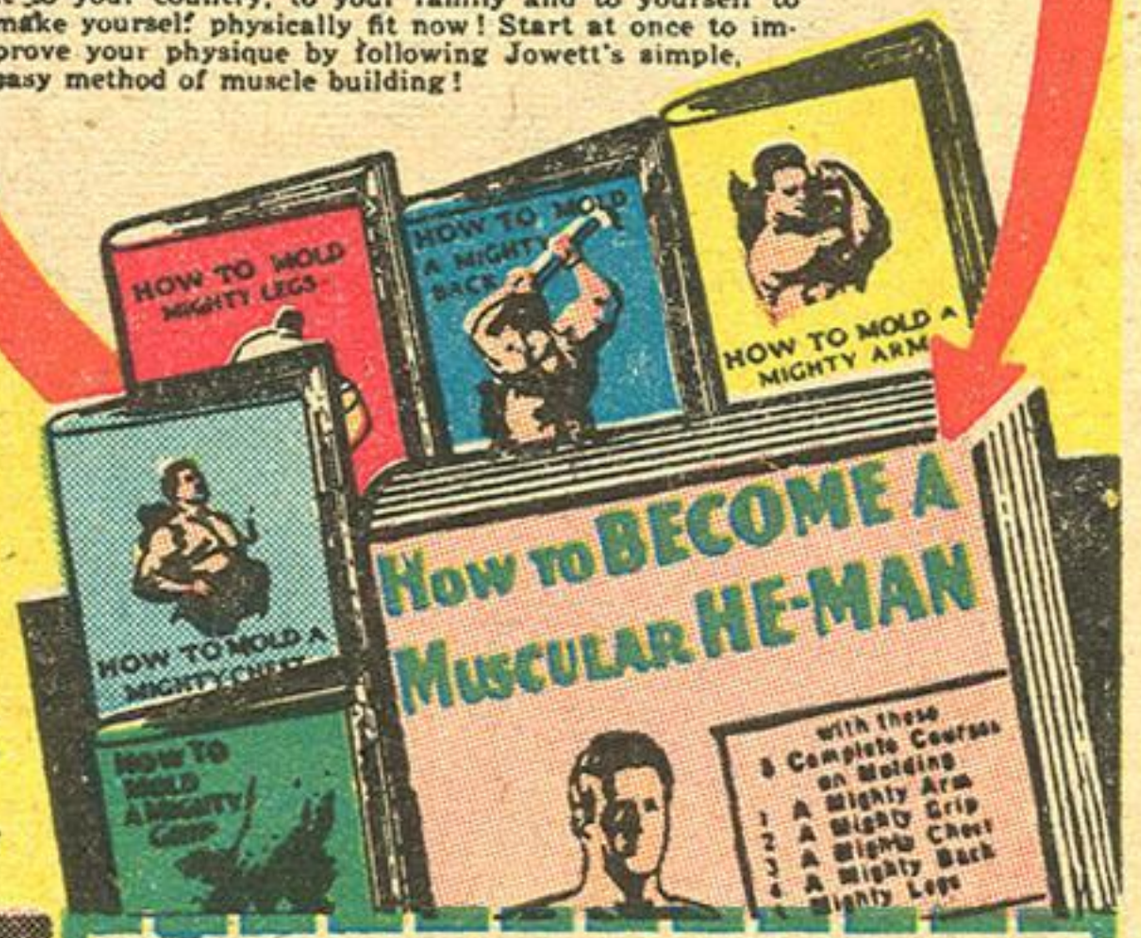
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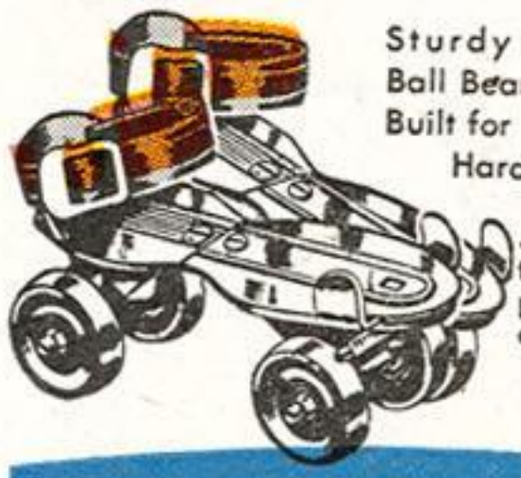

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